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§ 4.100 General rules and guidelines.

(a) *Effective date and applicability*—(1) *Effective date and general applicability.* These rules shall be in effect on and after March 1, 1979, and except as qualified by the provisions of paragraphs (a)(2) and (3) of this section, shall apply to all appeals brought before the Interior Board of Contract Appeals.

(2) *Special applicability.* The rule set forth in § 4.102(a) provides for alternative applicability, depending upon whether the appeal involved is subject to the Contract Disputes Act of 1978, Public Law 95-563 (41 U.S.C. 601-613). The rules set forth in §§ 4.102 (c), (d), and (e), 4.113, and 4.120 shall apply exclusively to appeals which are subject to the Contract Disputes Act of 1978.

(3) *When an appeal is subject to the Contract Disputes Act of 1978.* An appeal shall be subject to the Contract Disputes Act of 1978 if it involves a contract entered into on or after March 1, 1979; or, at the election of the appellant, if the appeal involves a contract entered into before March 1, 1979, and the contracting officer's decision from which the appeal is taken is dated March 1, 1979, or thereafter.

(b) *Jurisdiction for considering appeals.* The Interior Board of Contract Appeals (referred to herein as the "Board") shall consider and determine appeals from decisions of contracting officers relating to contracts made by (i) the Department of the Interior or (ii) any other executive agency when such agency or the Administrator of the Office of Federal Procurement Policy has duly designated the Board to decide the appeal.

(c) *Location and organization of the Board.* (1) The Board's address is 801 North Quincy Street, Arlington, Virginia 22203. Its telephone number is (703) 235-3813.

(2) The Board consists of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, and other members all of whom are attorneys at law duly licensed by a State, Commonwealth, Territory, or the District of Columbia. In general, the appeals are assigned to a panel of at least two members who decide the cases. However, in cases of disagreement, or unusual circumstances, a panel of three members will be assigned to decide by a majority

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vote. Board members are designated Administrative Judges.

(d) *Time extensions and computations.* (1) Where possible, procedural actions should be taken in less time than the maximum time allowed. Where appropriate and justified, however, extensions of time will be granted. All requests for extensions of time shall be in writing.

(2) In computing any period of time, the day of the event from which the designated period of time begins to run shall not be included, but the last day of the period shall be included unless it is a Saturday, Sunday, or a legal holiday, in which event the period shall run to the end of the next business day.

(e) *General guidelines*—(1) *Place of filings.* Unless the Board otherwise directs, all notices of appeal, pleadings, and other communications shall be filed with the Board at the address indicated herein. Communications to the Board shall be addressed to Interior Board of Contract Appeals, 801 North Quincy Street, Arlington, Virginia 22203.

(2) *Representation of parties.* Whenever in these rules reference is made to contractor, appellant, contracting officer, respondent, or parties, this shall include respective counsel for the parties, as soon as appropriate notices of appearances have been filed with the Board. In those cases where an executive agency, other than the Department of the Interior, has designated the Board to adjudicate its contract appeals, the term, "Department Counsel," shall mean Government Counsel assigned to represent such agency.

(3) *Interpretation of these rules.* These rules will be interpreted so as to secure a just and inexpensive determination of appeals without unnecessary delay.

(4) *Decisions on questions of law.* When an appeal is taken pursuant to a disputes clause in a contract which limits appeals to disputes concerning questions of fact, the Board will, nevertheless, consider and decide all questions of law necessary for the complete adjudication of the issues.

(f) *Ex parte communications.* No member of the Board or of the Board's staff shall entertain, nor shall any person directly or indirectly involved in an appeal submit to the Board or the

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Board's staff, off the record, any evidence, explanation, analysis, or advice, whether written or oral, without the knowledge and consent of the adverse party, regarding any matter at issue in that appeal. This provision does not apply to consultation among Board members or to ex parte communications concerning the Board's administrative functions or procedures.

(g) *Sanctions.* If any party fails or refuses to obey an order issued by the Board, the Board may make such order in regard to the failure as it considers necessary to the just and expeditious conduct of the appeal.

[46 FR 57499, Nov. 24, 1981, as amended at 50 FR 8325, Mar. 1, 1985; 67 FR 4368, Jan. 30, 2002]

PREHEARING PROCEDURE RULES

§ 4.101 Who may appeal.

Any contractor may appeal to the Board from decisions of contracting officers of any bureau or office of the Department of the Interior, or of any other agency with respect to which the Board exercises contract appeals jurisdiction, on disputed questions under contract provisions requiring the determination of such appeals by the head of the agency or his duly authorized representative or Board.

§ 4.102 Appeals—how taken.

(a) *Notice of appeal.* Notice of an appeal must be in writing (a suggested form of notice appears as appendix I to subpart C herein following § 4.128). The original, together with two copies, may be filed with the Board or the contracting officer from whose decision the appeal is taken. The notice of appeal must be mailed or otherwise filed within 90 days from the date of receipt of the contracting officer's decision, if the appeal is subject to the Contract Disputes Act of 1978; otherwise, within the time specified therefor in the contract.

(b) *Contents of notice of appeal.* A notice of appeal should indicate that an appeal is thereby intended, and should identify the contract (by number), the Department's bureau or office involved in the dispute, and the decision from which the appeal is taken. The notice of appeal should be signed personally by the appellant (the contractor mak-

ing the appeal), or by an authorized officer of the appellant corporation or member of the appellant firm, or by the contractor's duly authorized representative or attorney. The complaint referred to in § 4.107 may be filed with the notice of appeal, or the contractor may designate the notice of appeal as a complaint, if it otherwise fulfills the requirements of a complaint.

(c) *Failure of CO to issue decision on claims of \$50,000 or less.* Where the contractor has submitted a claim of \$50,000 or less to the contracting officer and has requested a written decision within 60 days from receipt of the request, and the contracting officer has not complied, the contractor may file a notice of appeal as provided in paragraph (a) of this section, citing the failure of the contracting officer to issue a decision. (See § 4.100(a)(2).)

(d) *Failure of CO to issue decision on claims in excess of \$50,000.* Where the contractor has submitted a claim in excess of \$50,000 to the contracting officer and the contracting officer has failed to issue a decision within a reasonable time, the contractor may file a notice of appeal as provided in paragraph (a) of this section, citing the failure to issue a decision. (See § 4.100(a)(2).)

(e) *Optional stay of proceeding.* Upon docketing of appeals filed pursuant to paragraphs (c) or (d) of this section, the Board may at its option, stay further proceedings pending issuance of a final decision by the contracting officer within such period of time as is determined by the Board. (See § 4.100(a)(2).)

§ 4.103 Forwarding and docketing of appeals.

(a) *Forwarding of appeal.* When a notice of appeal in any form has been received by the contracting officer, he shall endorse thereon the date of mailing (or the date of receipt, if the notice was otherwise conveyed) and within 5 days shall forward said notice of appeal to the Board by certified mail. He shall also promptly notify the Department's Office of the Solicitor, in accordance with instructions of the Solicitor, that the appeal has been received in order that a Department counsel may be appointed.